

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 IO-10 DPW-01 SNM-02 DEAE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05

EUR-12 /090 W

----- 032925

R 080531Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1410

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC POLAD

USSAG

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 8282

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, SNAR, LA

SUBJECT: TALK WITH PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA

BEGIN SUMMARY. I MET WITH PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA THIS MORNING. THIS WAS OUR FIRST MEETING SINCE HIS HEART ATTACK. ALTHOUGH THE PRIME MINISTER WAS ALERT AND THOUGHTFUL, I FOUND HIM GREATLY CHANGED. END SUMMARY.

1. GENERAL SITUATION. AFTER THE USUAL COURTESIES HAD BEEN EXCHANGED, THE PRIME MINISTER ASKED ME HOW I THOUGHT THINGS HAD GONE DURING HIS ABSENCE. I REPLIED THAT I BELIVED THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS TOWARD NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND THAT AMERICAN RELATIONS WITH THE PGNU WERE ON AN EVEN KEEL. I MENTIONED PHOUMI'S TRIP TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND
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REVIEWED THE SUBJECTS WHICH WERE COVERED BY THE

SECRETARY IN HIS TALK WITH PHOUMI. THESE WERE THE CONTINUATION OF AMERICAN AID AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME LEVEL AS LAST YEAR, THE KHMER/GRUNK CREDENTIALS ISSUE AND THE POW/MIA PROBLEM.

2. POW/MIA. THE PRIME MINISTER ASKED ME WHETHER ALL AMERICAN PRISONERS HAD BEEN RETURNED. I ANSWERED THAT DURING HIS ABSENCE EMMET KAY HAD BEEN RELEASED AND THAT THE PATHET LAO CLAIM TO HAVE NO OTHER LIVING AMERICAN PRISONERS. WE CONTINUED TO BE CONCERNED OVER THIS ISSUE, HOWEVER, AS WE HAD AS YET RECEIVED NO INFORMATION REGARDING AIR CREWS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN IN PATHET LAO HANDS, NOR HAD ANY ARRANGEMENTS BEEN MADE FOR THE INSPECTION OF CRASH SITES AND THE RECOVERY OF BODIES. I NOTED THAT WE UNDERSTOOD THIS ISSUE WOULD BE DISCUSSED IN THE JCIA SHORTLY. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE CONTINUED TO BE INTERESTED IN THIS PROBLEM AND THAT HE WOULD GIVE IT A NUDGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

3. KHMER CREDENTIALS. I SAID THAT I KNEW THE PRIME MINISTER WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE ASIAN RESOLUTION AND I HAD HAD A BRIEF REPORT ON THE CALL PAID ON HIM BY CHARGE STONE. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THE ASIAN RESOLUTION WAS EXCELLENT AND THAT HE WOULD BE DISCUSSING IT WITH HIS GOVERNMENT NEXT WEEK. SOUVANNA THEN REPEATED AS HE HAS ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS THAT HE COULD NEVER SUPPORT A PRO-SIHANOUK RESOLUTION UNTIL HE HAD RECEIVED A FORMAL APOLOGY FROM SIHANOUK FOR THE WAY IN WHICH SIHANOUK HAD BEHAVED TOWARDS HIM. (COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SOUVANNA HAS NOW TOLD BOTH STONE AND ME THAT HE IS FOR THE RESOLUTION, I AM SKEPTICAL REGARDING HIS ABILITY TO DELIVER THE LAO VOTE.)

4. SOUTH VIETNAM. THE PRIME MINISTER THEN DIGRESSED AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH ON HIS DISENCHANTMENT WITH THE POLICY PURSUED BY PRESIDENT THIEU. HE REPEATED HIS FAMILIAR ARGUMENTS FOR A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION AND FOR A DISPLAY OF GREATER FLEXIBILITY BY THE GVN. I
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COMMENTED THAT IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE GVN TO BE FLEXIBLE IN THE FACE OF THE PRESSURE BEING EXERTED BY THE NVA.

5. NARCOTICS. I TOLD THE PRIME MINISTER THAT DURING HIS ABSENCE WE HAD COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE ANTI-NARCOTICS OPERATIONS OF THE NATIONAL POLICE HAD BECOME INCREASINGLY EFFECTIVE AND THAT IN OUR

VIEW A SPECIAL UNIT, THE GSI, WAS NO LONGER NECESSARY. I RECALLED THAT THIS UNIT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED BY HIM AND THAT I HAD NOT WISHED TO RAISE THIS MATTER WITH THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR BEFORE HIS RETURN. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT HE WOULD RAISE THE MATTER WITH INTERIOR AND WITH GENERAL KHAMHOU.

6. COMMENT. THIS PRIME MINISTER HAS LOST WEIGHT AND SPOKE CLEARLY BUT IN A VERY LOW VOICE. HIS IS USUALLY FASTIDIOUS ABOUT HIS APPEARANCE BUT HIS HAIR WAS DISHEVELED AND I AM UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS RESTING WHEN I ARRIVED. HE ADMITTED TO FEELING VERY TIRED AND SAID HE WOULD BE GOING TO LUANG PRABANG ON NOVEMBER 14TH OR 15TH FOR AN EXTENDED STAY. ALTHOUGH WE HAD BEEN ANTICIPATING THAT SOUVANNA'S ABILITY TO OPERATE WOULD BE GREATLY REDUCED BY HIS HEART ATTACK, OUR CONVERSATION TODAY HAS CONVINCED ME THAT HIS ACTIVITY WILL BE GREATLY RESTRICTED IN THE FUTURE. WHITEHOUSE

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